

By Erika Adolphus

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The economy and unity were key themes during President Obama's State of the Union address Tuesday night.

The mood was somber, with the memory of the Tucson shootings fresh in lawmakers' minds.

Many of them crossed party lines to sit together.

Some Central Georgia's lawmakers released statements after the address to share their views on what the President had to say.

First District Congressman Jack Kingston's statement urged action on the problems facing the nation.

"In the words of Winston Churchill, 'America will always do the right thing, but only after exhausting all other options,'" Kingston, a Republican, wrote. "After two years of big government and big spending policies, we have officially exhausted the other options. It's time to get the government out of the way and to remove the impediment to growth and job creation.

"While I am encouraged by the tone of tonight's speech, it must be followed with real action to cut the budget and rein in government. We cannot afford to play a game of semantics - spending by any other name increases debt and further borrows on the backs of our children."

During the speech, Kingston's office said he planned to sit next to Congressman Sanford Bishop, who represents the other half of south Georgia. You can view Congressman Bishop's response to the right.

Eighth District Representative Austin Scott also released a statement. ""I am glad the President has embraced the Republican principles of lowering the corporate tax rate and addressing tort reform. I hope we can work together in a bi-partisan manner on these two issues as they will be vital in jump starting the economy.

Rep. Scott goes on to say, "I appreciate that the President acknowledged in his speech tonight that we need to address the national debt, which has increased \$5.3 trillion since Democrats took control in 2007. We will know when the President delivers his budget proposal to Congress if he is serious about reducing the level of the national debt or if his comments tonight were just words."

We spoke to Scott after the speech, you can view part of what he had to say on the righthand side of this page.

U.S. Senator Saxby Chambliss said he was disappointed by parts of the President's speech. ""I am disappointed that the president has proposed what amounts to a new stimulus plan under another name," the Republican wrote. "We all remember the last economic stimulus plan - nearly \$1 trillion committed to "shovel-ready" projects, most of which never came to pass. And unemployment in Georgia has actually increased since then. We don't need a new stimulus at a time when Americans are worried about overspending and our nation's financial future.

"Creating jobs means getting America's fiscal house in order, not spending even more taxpayer money we don't have. In the last election, voters sent a very clear message to Washington: Reduce spending and focus on America's economic health. To that end, I have been working for the past several months with a bipartisan group of senators whose goal is to introduce legislation to effectively address the nation's financial issues. It's time we get past the rhetoric, get down to the details and take action."